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PEREZ CALLS FOR JOINT DEFENSE AGAINST U.S.

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(TEXT) CARACAS, 29 JUL -- PRESIDENT CARLOS ANDRES PEREZ TODAY CAME OUT IN FAVOR OF JOINT ACTION BY LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES TO DEFEND THEIR POSITION VIS-A-VIS THE UNITED STATES.

THE VENEZUELAN PRESIDENT, WHO WAS OPTIMISTIC ABOUT REFORMING THE OAS, TOLD A NEWS CONFERENCE TODAY THAT HE IS IN FAVOR OF ALL COUNTRIES OF THE CONTINENT PARTICIPATING IN AN INTER-AMERICAN ORGANIZATION. HE REITERATED THAT HE WAS HAPPY TO HEAR THE CORDIAL AND FRIENDLY ALLUSION MADE BY CUBAN PRIME MINISTER FIDEL CASTRO REGARDING THE POSSIBILITY OF RELATIONS BEING ESTABLISHED BETWEEN CUBA AND VENEZUELA.

HE SAID THIS HAS BEEN THOUGHT ABOUT EVER SINCE RELATIONS WERE BROKEN, BECAUSE THE SITUATION IS ABNORMAL. PEREZ EXPLAINED THAT AT PRESENT "THE CAUSES WHICH PROMPTED THE BREAK NO LONGER EXIST."

IN THE COMING MONTHS, HE STATED, THE OAS WILL MEET TO DISCUSS THE MATTER OF ESTABLISHING RELATIONS WITH CUBA AND HIS COUNTRY WILL STAND BY ITS POSITION AT THAT MEETING. OUR COUNTRY, HE EXPLAINED, "IS OBLIGED AT LEAST TO MEET CONTRACTUAL COMMITMENTS." HE SAID CUBA IS A SOVEREIGN STATE AND "THERE IS NO WAY WE CAN FORCE IT TO JOIN THE OAS, JUST AS IT CANNOT FORCE US TO QUIT IT."

PEREZ NOTED THAT WHEN RELATIONS ARE REESTABLISHED, CUBA COULD BECOME AN OIL MARKET AND IT COULD MAKE UP OUR SUGAR DEFICIT. THERE ARE GREAT POSSIBILITIES OF ECONOMIC EXCHANGES BETWEEN THE DIVERSE COUNTRIES OF THE REGION, HE POINTED OUT.

THE VENEZUELAN PRESIDENT SAID: "IF WE DO NOT SHOW THAT DEMOCRACY IS NOT A SYSTEM AT THE SERVICE OF THE PRIVILEGED, BUT AT THE SERVICE OF THE NATIONAL MAJORITIES, OUR COUNTRIES COULD AGAIN BECOME PREY TO DICTATORSHIPS OR TO GUERRILLA ACTIVITIES."

ASKED ABOUT THE OUTBREAK OF GUERRILLA ACTIVITIES IN LATIN AMERICA AND HOW THE NATIONS COULD COUNTER THIS PHENOMENON, PEREZ REPLIED THAT "FORTUNATELY, THIS SITUATION HAS BEEN OVERCOME IN VENEZUELA."

DELVING INTO THIS SUBJECT DURING HIS NEWS CONFERENCE WITH MEXICAN PRESIDENT LUIS ECHEVERRIA, THE VENEZUELAN PRESIDENT COMMENTED THAT "GUERRILLAS ARE THE MANIFESTATION OF A MOMENT OF CONFUSION IN OUR COUNTRIES."

"THE EXPERIENCE IN A LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRY WHERE AN OBRUSIVE DICTATORSHIP WAS DEFEATED AND A POPULAR MOVEMENT EMERGED--WHICH I DO NOT WISH TO LABEL NOW BUT ONLY EXPRESS MY RESPECT FOR THIS SYSTEM--GENERATED VAST ESTERDIAST AT THAT TIME TOWARD THE GUERRILLA MOVEMENT, AND IT WAS BELIEVED THAT THE POLITICAL HISTORY OF OUR COUNTRIES COULD BE CHANGED THROUGH VIOLENCE. MANY OF OUR COUNTRIES WERE CHOSEN AS TARGETS FOR THIS BUT THE GUERRILLA MOVEMENT FAILED AND, FORTUNATELY, OUR COUNTRY IS HEADING TOWARD THE ACHIEVEMENT OF DEMOCRATIC GOALS ON A DEMOCRATIC PATH," HE STATED.

THE VENEZUELAN PRESIDENT WENT ON: "WE DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENTS HAVE A GRAVE RESPONSIBILITY BECAUSE IF WE DO NOT SHOW THAT THIS SYSTEM IS CAPABLE OF SOLVING THE PROBLEMS OF THE MASSES, MOST OF THESE COUNTRIES WILL FALL PREY TO "SITUATIONS OF DICTATORSHIP OR GUERRILLA ACTIVITIES." HE STRESSED, HOWEVER, THAT IN ADDITION TO GUERRILLA ACTIVITIES THERE IS ANOTHER IMPORTANT PROBLEM--THE ATTITUDE OF LATIN AMERICAN YOUTH TOWARD THE ADULT GENERATION.

"I DO NOT WISH TO FALL BACK ON THE EXCUSE THAT THIS IS A WORLD PROBLEM, NO. THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF LATIN AMERICAN YOUTH ARE QUITE DIFFERENT FROM THOSE OF YOUTH IN OTHER PARTS OF THE WORLD," HE STATED. "LATIN AMERICAN YOUTH DO NOT BELIEVE IN THEIR GOVERNMENTS. THEY HAVE NO FAITH IN THE ADULT GENERATIONS BECAUSE WE HAVE BEEN LIVING WITHIN A CORRUPT PRAGMATISM FORGETTING THE INTERESTS AND CONCERNS OF OUR YOUTH."

PEREZ STATED THAT YOUTH DO NOT FEEL SECURE IN A SOCIETY WHICH OFFERS THEM ONLY FRIVOLITY AND IDLENESS. "YOUNG PEOPLE REALIZE THAT WHAT HAS BEEN BEQUEATHED THEM AS FUNDAMENTAL AND MORAL VALUES ARE BASICALLY LIES, BECAUSE THEY ARE NOT OR WERE NOT PRACTICED BY THE GOVERNMENTS OR SOCIETIES IN WHICH THEY LIVE," HE STATED.

"THIS LACK OF AUTHENTICITY," HE CONTINUED, "BETWEEN THE TRUE PATH OF THE GOVERNMENTS AND SOCIETY AND THE NORMS WE PREACH TO YOUTH HAS CREATED THIS DANGEROUS SITUATION FOR THE FUTURE OF OUR NATIONS."

"FOR ME, THIS IS THE ESSENTIAL OBJECTIVES OF MY GOVERNMENT: TO GIVE CONFIDENCE TO YOUTH, TO SHOW IT THAT IT HAS PATHS, GOALS WHICH IT CAN ACHIEVE TO JOIN IN THE MARCH OF THE NEW SOCIETY. THIS IS A MUCH MORE DANGEROUS PROBLEM THAN THE GUERRILLAS, WHO, AS I HAVE ALREADY SAID, HAVE BEEN BEATEN FOR GOOD IN LATIN AMERICA," PEREZ STATED.

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